

**FLORIDA BUILDING COMMISSION**  
**Mechanical Technical Advisory Committee**  
**Orlando, Florida**  
**August 25, 2003**

**Minutes**

The meeting was convened by Acting Chair Steve Bassett at 3:00 p.m. The amended agenda and minutes were approved.

**Voting Members Present:**

Steve Bassett, Bob Andrews, Jim Cummings, Al Fraga, Betsy Goll, Leonard Lipka, Donny Pittmann, Pete Quintela, Phillip Simmons.

**Others Present:** Ronnie Spooner, Roger Sanders, Joe Crum, Maury Jacobson, Jim DePietro, Richard Fine, Ann Stanton, Al Bragg.

**Meeting Objectives:**

Review request for declaratory statement, DCA-DEC-131, and provide recommendations to the Commission to answer the seven questions asked.

**Actions Taken:**

Al Fraga first declared a conflict of interest; he is the petitioner for the DEC request under consideration. It was discussed that other voting members of the TAC did not have conflicts because the DEC request had no bearing on the court case in which Broward County was involved. Fraga then provided input on the criteria of section 412.5(2) of the FBC-Building and his efforts to clarify the issue with Broward County, BOAF and the ICC. Lipka asked whether the interior corridors were pressurized. Fraga stated that, yes, they were pressurized for ventilation. Andrews stated that there were other issues covered by the Florida Fire Prevention Code. Bassett directed staff to include a statement about fire prevention in the minutes.

Andrews made a case that the same provisions in the FBC-Mechanical (section 403.6.4) were required to comprise a "smoke control system", which was intended to provide people a chance to escape the building and implied much more than the prescriptive criteria for natural ventilation found in 403.6.4(2). Others stated that that 403.6 implies that Sections 403.6.1 through 403.6.7 constitute a "smoke control system."

Quintela stated that the 2001 Florida Building Code had a "piss poor treatment" of smoke control and that he had pointed this out previously. This part of the code needs to be fixed. Andrews agreed that this part of the code is poorly written and involves 20 year old technology which is no longer in the International Building Code.

Fraga again stated that the code is very specific and only requires certain criteria. Assuming the fire starts in one apartment, he believes that the objective is to prevent the smoke from reaching

other apartments. Jacobson asked how people were supposed to get out of a 24 story building without an effective smoke control system. Simmons wanted to know who would be opening the windows to let the smoke out. Andrews added that if the wind blows the wrong way, the smoke will not be blown out. Pittman stated that smoke control is not yet a complete science; whether or not we like it, the code provides a prescriptive alternative. Crum added that the response to the DEC should be based on what the code currently says.

Question 1: To the question, *Florida Building Code – Building, Section 412.5, Subparagraph 2, offers a mode of compliance for fully sprinklered buildings that would require no mechanical air handling system to remove the products of combustion. Is this correct?*, the answer is **YES**.

Vote: 7:2 PASS

Questions 2 and 7: To the question, *When complying under Florida Building Code - Building 412.5(2) and Florida Building Code – Mechanical 403.6.4 (2), no smoke testing is required. Is this correct?*, the answer is **YES**, unless the building official requires it under 301.4.3 of the Mechanical code. 8:1 PASS

Question 3: To the question, *Does the Code require mechanical air handling system(s) for the removal of the products of combustion where there are interior spaces that have fewer interior doors than those defined by 412.5 (1) for the exterior?*, the answer is **NO**. Section B 412.5, which provides the spatial requirements for panels or windows in both (1) and (2), addresses “panels or windows *in the exterior walls*” only. Interior walls are not addressed. 7:2 PASS

Question 4: To the question, *Does the code require a mechanical air handling system(s) for the removal of the products of combustion in an open garage in a fully sprinklered high-rise building that has fewer interior doors than those defined by s. B 412.5 (2)*, the answer is **NO**. Section B 412.5 of the code allows for either mechanical or natural ventilation for the removal of products of combustion in garages meeting the criteria of B 411.3 for open parking garages. 9:0 PASS

Question 5: To the question, *Is it the intent of section B 412.5 to require mechanical smoke control in a fully sprinklered high-rise building where the building meets the letter of s. B 412.5 and the operable windows are behind closed doors*, the answer is **NO**. Section B 412.5 (1), which provides the spatial requirement for panels or windows in both (1) and (2), addresses “panels or windows *in the exterior walls*” only. Interior walls are not addressed. However, whether the “letter of section B 412.5” is met must be demonstrated to the authority having jurisdiction. 7:2 PASS

Question 6: To the question, *Does section M 403.6.4 (2) [B 412.5(2)] offer a mode of compliance for fully sprinklered buildings that would require no mechanical air handling system to remove the products of combustion?*, the answer is **YES** (see Question 1).

7:2 PASS

Question 7: To the question, *Is it correct that when complying under FBC-M 403.6.4 (2), no smoke testing is required?*, see the answer to Question 2.

**Adjourn:** The TAC meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.